

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, December 11, 2015

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Attorney General Racine Reminds the District's Drivers to Celebrate Safely This Holiday Season

WRAP SoberRide Program Begins December 11; Offers Free Taxi Rides up to \$30

WASHINGTON, D. C. – As the holiday celebration season swings into high gear, Attorney General Karl A. Racine is reminding District residents to plan ahead for their own safety and that of others when it comes to driving, walking or cycling on the District's roadways.

"Impaired driving is a threat all year long, but it is especially acute during the holiday season when there are many parties and other celebrations," said Attorney General Racine. **"Our job is to ensure the public is aware of the legal and moral consequences of impaired driving, as well as options for making it to their destinations safely."**

While impaired driving fatalities tragically occur year-round, evidence shows that the winter holiday season is a particularly dangerous time on the roadways. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that, during the 2013 winter holiday season (December 18-31, 2013), 1,180 people were killed in automobile accidents. Almost a third (30 percent) of those fatalities were in impaired or drunk-driving crashes. On Christmas Day 2013 alone, 23 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes on America's roads.

'Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over' Campaign Begins December 16

From December 16, 2015 through January 1, 2016, law enforcement officials throughout the National Capital Region will be joining NHTSA as it kicks off its holiday "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" crackdown. Law enforcement officials in the District will step up their efforts to prevent impaired driving.

WRAP SoberRide Program Begins December 11

Again this year, nightly from December 11, 2015 through January 1, 2016, the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) will be offering its free taxi service to help get folks home safely. The rides – free for fares of up to \$30 – will be available from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. each day of the program. To get a free taxi ride, call 1-800-200-TAXI (1-800-200-8294). In order to use this service, participants must be 21 years of age or older. For more information about SoberRide and its services, visit:

<http://www.wrap.org/soberride/index.htm>

Impaired-Driving Penalties in the District

In the District, the maximum penalty for the first offense of driving under the influence is 180 days in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine, and the maximum penalty for the first offense of operating a vehicle while impaired is 90 days in jail and/or a \$500 fine. Other factors, however, can trigger greater penalties and jail terms:

- If the defendant has a prior conviction;
- If the defendant has a blood-alcohol content over a certain threshold;
- If certain drugs are present in the defendant's system;
- Or if there are children in the vehicle.

Tips for Avoiding Impaired Driving

Attorney General Racine recommends these simple tips to prevent drunk driving:

- Plan a safe way home *before* the fun begins.
- Before drinking, designate a sober driver.
- If you're impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation.
- If you happen to see a drunk driver on the road, don't hesitate to call 911.
- If you are with a friend who is about to drive while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to their destination safely.
- Besides using the WRAP SoberRide program, NHTSA has a SaferRide mobile app (available for Android devices on Google Play and for Apple devices in the iTunes Store) that helps potential impaired drivers stay off our roads by allowing users to call a taxi or a friend and by identifying their location so they can be picked up. For more information:

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/About+NHTSA/Press+Releases/2014/SaferRide-app-and-new-data-highlight-holiday-drunk-driving-crackdown>

The Office of the Attorney General wishes all a safe and joyous winter holiday season. Flyers

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